

ACTUAL FY03	PROJECTED FY04		BUDGET FY05	VETERANS' SERVICES/ BENEFITS
275 035 <u>201 680</u> 476 715	286 740 <u>225 000</u> 511 740	ADMINISTRATION BENEFITS	285 885 <u>225 000</u> 510 885	<p><b>PURPOSE &amp; OVERVIEW:</b> Man-dated by Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 115, the Department's mission is to advocate on behalf of Cambridge's wartime veterans (8 092)</p> <p>and their families (22 502), provide them with quality support services, and direct a financial assistance program for those veterans and their dependents who are in need. The primary function of the Department is to administer a benefits program which provides monetary aid to qualified veterans and/or their dependents for food, clothing, shelter, utilities, house supplies, personal needs, insurance, fuel, telephone and transportation, as well as medical, dental, hospital, nursing home care and burial allowances. The cost of this benefits program is reimbursed by the State at the rate of \$.75 for every City dollar expended. In addition, the Department assists veterans who are 100% disabled or parents and wives of veterans killed in action or who died as a result of a service-connected injury in receiving an annual \$1 500 annuity at no cost to the City. In FY04, Cambridge veterans and their families received \$8.5 million in Federal Veterans' Administration benefits. The Department assists veterans in processing applications for federal benefits, such as service connected compensations, disability pensions, personal needs/aids and attendance pensions, social security/disability benefits, medical, education, housing, employment, life insurance and death benefits. The Department also provides assistance in filing for City tax exemptions and abatements earmarked for veterans or their spouses. The Department coordinates public events on Patriots', Veterans' and Memorial Days, including the Memorial Day Parade. In addition, in conjunction with the Cambridge Veterans' Organization (CVO), the Department participates in the dedication of streets, squares and parks as well as attending funerals of veterans killed in action. Each Memorial Day, over 8 600 flags are placed on the graves of veterans interred in Cambridge cemeteries. The Department also serves as Burial/Graves Agent for indigent Cambridge residents (non-veterans) who are buried in the Cambridge cemetery.</p> <p><b>SIGNIFICANT BUDGET MODIFICATIONS:</b> The FY05 Veteran's Budget reflects an increase of \$25 000 for veterans' benefits based on the FY04 projected costs. The Veteran's Benefits budget is \$225 000 with this increase. It is anticipated that the state will reimburse the City for a portion of these increased costs.</p>

## FY04 MAJOR DEPARTMENTAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Successfully managed an 8% increase in the number clients served. Continued to minimize M.G.L. Chapter 115 expenditures (veterans' benefits) by aggressively procuring federal benefits, third party reimbursements and improving case management.
- Continued to enhance the Department's Web site ensuring that quality, up-to-date information is available to Veterans and their families.
- Assisted veterans and/or their spouses in applying for the Prescription Advantage Program. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts mandated this program for all eligible recipients in FY04.
- Assisted veterans and/or their spouses in applying for the Mass. Health Insurance Program. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts mandated this program for all eligible recipients effective January 2004.
- Implemented new changes in policies and procedures, pursuant to CMR 108 (Massachusetts Veterans Benefits Laws and Regulations) effective January 2004.
- In conjunction with the VA Boston Healthcare System, participated in "Home Coming Day" for Enduring Freedom and Iraq Veterans.
- In a partnership with the Cambridge Post Office, unveiled a new postage stamp "Purple Heart" during our annual Veterans' Day Observance.

## FY05 GOALS

- *GOAL 1: Continue compliance with MGL Chapter 115 (Veterans' Benefits) regulations.*

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	FY03 ACTUAL	FY04 BUDGET	FY04 PROJECTED	FY05 PROPOSED
1. Ensure applications are forwarded for approval to the state within 10 days after intake	100%	100%	100%	100%

■ *GOAL 1: (continued)*

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	FY03 ACTUAL	FY04 BUDGET	FY04 PROJECTED	FY05 PROPOSED
2. Develop a case management plan for each new client within 30 days of intake	100%	100%	100%	100%
3. Ensure state returns for reimbursement are forwarded to the state within 10 days following the payment month	100%	100%	100%	100%
4. Number of clients receiving weekly/monthly City subsidy; (units of service)	1 120	1 250	1 280	1 300
5. Number of veterans receiving City subsidy;	n/a	44	44	45
6. Number of spouses or dependents receiving City subsidy;	n/a	34	34	35
7. Percentage of new clients accessing federal benefits	20%	20%	20%	25%

■ *GOAL 2: Increase public awareness of veterans' benefits, services and issues by producing a veterans' television program on cable television and veterans' articles for local publication.*

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	FY03 ACTUAL	FY04 BUDGET	FY04 PROJECTED	FY05 PROPOSED
1. Number of Cable TV programs produced or rebroadcast	9	12	12	12
2. Number of newspaper articles produced	18	16	16	16

■ *GOAL 3: Increase community participation in veterans' ceremonial events by increasing public awareness through personal presentations, media utilization, linkages with schools, community organizations and other City departments. Continue the ceremonial and public events function of the Department by honoring both living and deceased veterans.*

■ *GOAL 4: Produce timely updates to the Veterans' Department Web page.*

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	FY03 ACTUAL	FY04 BUDGET	FY04 PROJECTED	FY05 PROPOSED
1. Number of veterans benefits up-dates	12	12	12	12
2. Number of informational/current event updates	12	12	12	12

- *GOAL 5: Continue to upgrade staff skills with an emphasis on team building, skill sharing and accountability.*

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	FY03 ACTUAL	FY04 BUDGET	FY04 PROJECTED	FY05 PROPOSED
1. Number of internal staff trainings	4	4	4	4
2. Number of external trainings	12	12	12	12

- *GOAL 6: Aggressively identify and access federal and state resources for eligible clients.*

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	FY03 ACTUAL	FY04 BUDGET	FY04 PROJECTED	FY05 PROPOSED
1. Conduct assessments and evaluations of client eligibility for federal and state benefits; number of assessments	4	4	4	4

**FINANCING PLAN.** This budget is financed by \$312 630 in property taxes; \$4 500 in reimbursements from the Veterans' Administration for burial payments; \$132 225 in reimbursements from state Veterans' payments; and \$61 530 in cherry sheet revenue.

**STATUTORY ANALYSIS.** Salaries and Wages, \$231 185; Other Ordinary Maintenance, \$48 900; and Travel and Training, \$230 800.